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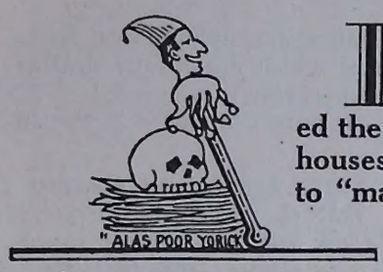
Is Silence Golden?



IT HAS been said that "Silence" is golden; but the box-office has proved the contrary in respect to Motion Pictures, for the Talking Picture has usurped the former position of the Silent Film; and the majority of houses discovered that their pictures had to talk in addition to "making faces."

The complications, in respect to foreign distribution, from a language standpoint were not considered, at that period when Talking Pictures on the American continent were playing to such phenomenal business, therefor no producer - distributor worried himself about foreign markets.

The sale of the Silent Films for foreign distribution was also an economic concern, there were still a sufficient number of "Silents" which were new to foreign countries; and an added angle for Silent distribution abroad, was the fact that foreign houses did not equip for "Sound" and "Talking Pictures" with the rapidity which transpired on the American continent, therefor there was still time to thrust oneself upon the Horns of this Foreign Language Dilemma!

To-day the foreign market is not only equipping itself with Talking apparatus, but is also demanding that pictures shall talk the language of the people who patronize them.

Other developments have also followed the trail of the Talking Picture; and a portion of the public still longs for the repose of the Silent Film, never having been converted to the audible phase of Motion Pictures, while some, who were converted, and became enthusiasts, grudgingly admit that an occasional Silent Film would be a novelty and a change!

There is something to it. The Silent Film was a distinct artistic achievement, a creation, it was different to all the other phases of dramatic expression.

Shall we lose this art of pantomime which revolutionized a world of people, making white, black and yellow races, of various degrees of civilization and culture devotees at its shrine?

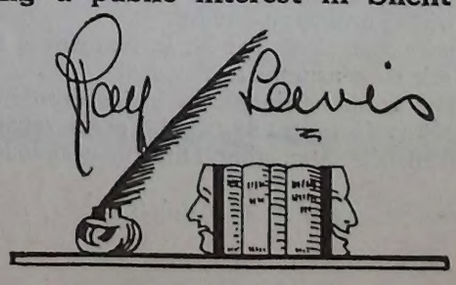
Some people are susceptible to "hunches," your editor is one of them; and a very pronounced "hunch" is one which persists in making itself felt and heard; and this relates itself to the Silent Film.

It is the opinion of your editor, that if producers would produce some of their pictures Silent, not silent versions of Talking Pictures, because this is only a compromise, and one should have the real thing, or nothing, the picture-public would not only appreciate the silent change, but appreciate the Talking Pictures more, giving them an opportunity to further establish their worth and quality.

No matter how interesting an entertainment is, if it is repeated week after week, without any marked variation, the public becomes satiated and over-critical, with unprofitable results.

Therefore "the hunch" recommends retaining a public interest in Silent Films for various reasons, present and future!

Some house could be used as a test, on a Silent Film once-a-month schedule; and it would help the foreign situation somewhat also. Perhaps Charles Chaplin will furnish a box - office report on his Silent Film which will prove a more substantial "hunch" for Showmen!



RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

A REPORT from England states that the Feb. 2nd note due by Fox for the Gaumont British ordinary shares has been paid by "friendly interests" of Fox, in order to give him an opportunity to protect his interests!

The note covered approximately three and a half millions.

At the time N. L. Nathanson resigned as Managing Director of Famous Players, the resignation ran parallel with the rejection of a plan to sell the Famous Players Canadian Corporation's controlling shares to the Gaumont British Interests. The offer at that time was $75.00 a share, cash payment.

It was contended by the opposing Canadian directors, that there was a Trust arrangement to keep Famous Players under Canadian control for a period of ten years; and since there existed a belief that Fox controlled the Gaumont-British, the directors could not break their pledge, and permit the Canadian Company to pass to American control.

THERE were statements made by several officers of the company to the press, citing these reasons for a non-sale; and at the meeting of shareholders which followed, various officers made various statements, including denials of the Gaumont-British offer, knowledge of such an offer, and the refusal of the offer, based on the knowledge that it was impossible, and would be contrary to the Trust agreement, and a violation of the offer upon which the Trust shares were sold to the shareholders, to permit the Canadian company to pass to American control.

The Kinematograph Weekly, of London, in its financial column, states, "It appears that the Fox Film Corporation's share interest is associated with the syndicate which controls Gaumont-British Corporation, but the control of the latter still remains in British hands."

The name of the syndicate is cited as the Metropolitan and Bradford, and is said to own 3,250,000 *ordinary shares out of a total of* £5,000,000. *The call was on the shares known as the Ostrer holding, and was at the rate of* 10s 6d *per share.*

THE RECENT spectacular rise on the market of Famous Players Canadian has been due directly to the rumours which cite an affiliation with Paramount-Publix.

One report even cited that N. L. Nathanson had been in New York to consummate the deal.

No report from headquarters in Toronto in respect to the deal was forthcoming, as the press reported that Arthur Cohen, the Managing Director was out of the city.

The Trust still consists of Adolph Zukor, I. W. Killam and N. L. Nathanson; of the three, N. L. Nathanson made a statement which denied any deal as far as his knowledge, or enterprise is concerned.

Meanwhile rumours continue and the stock reached Fifty-seven.

If the public has a good memory, it will remember that the Canadian directors stated they would not sell the company to an American Film Enterprise; and that Mr. Adolph Zukor, President of the Canadian Company and the Paramount-Publix, stated that his company had no intention of buying Famous Players Canadian Corp., he had but recently sold his shares, because of his information that the company would do better under Canadian control.

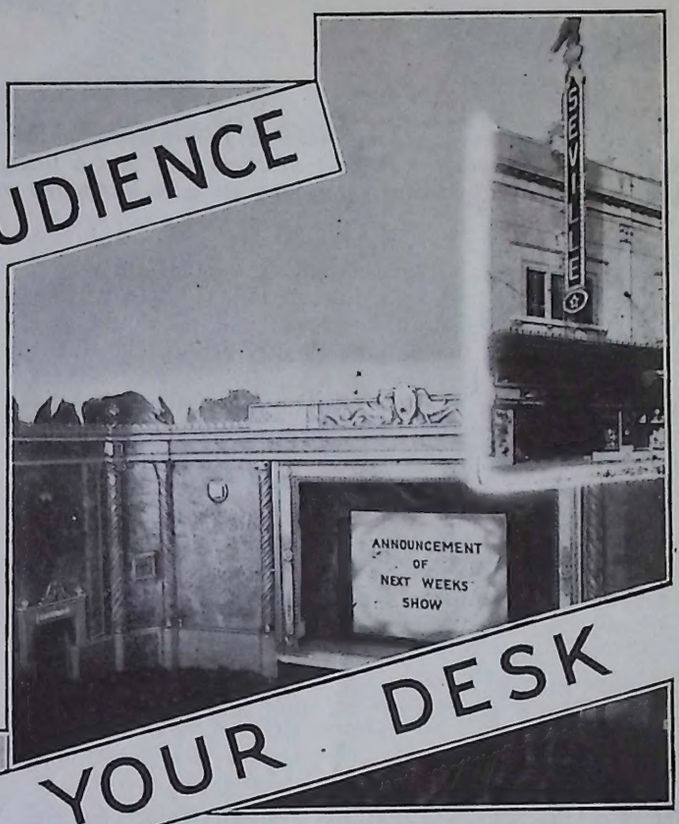
IN VIEW of the fact that the Canadian directors were so emphatic about keeping the company Canadian, and that a cash offer of $75.00 had been turned down for fear of American control, what kind of a right-about-face would the action of selling to any American company be?

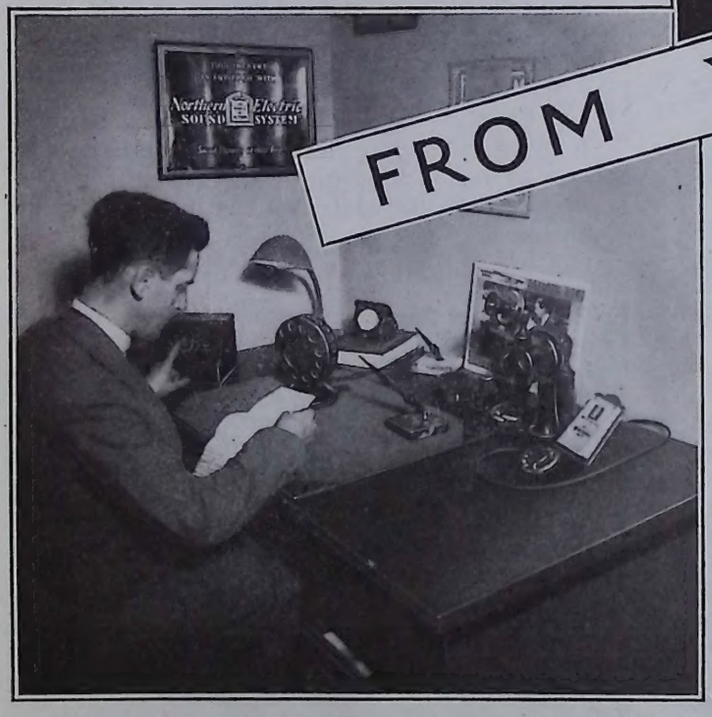
As far as the Paramount Company is concerned, one cannot see an advantage for this organization in buying Famous Players Canadian Corp. Paramount could not offer less than the other offer which was turned down; and since the control of the company is in the hands practically of those who form the Trust, with N. L. Nathanson under the present regime outvoted, Paramount's interests are well protected, for its interest lies in the distribution of its product, and protection of the franchise, which Famous Players Canadian Corp. holds.

Adolph Zukor is reported as having received five millions for his shares in Famous Players, shares which he originally invested in to protect his company's interest, if he gets this protection, and has his five million, what would induce him to part with the five million? No one, not even I. W. Killam, if I know and recognize the Showmanship vision of Adolph Zukor!

THEREFOR, we conclude that the affiliation rumours are simply share-boosters, not unprecedented in Finance history, not unusual; and may not have emanated from any of the officers of the company, but from a source which would like to unload some shares!

TALK TO YOUR AUDIENCE FROM YOUR DESK





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Observations

By The Editor

"Let he who observes, observe that he too is being observed in his observations; and therefor let him make his remarks as he observes the subject of them, nor add a tittle, nor a jot to that which passeth between the observer and the observed. So by these rules may all men know the observer is observant."

CHARLES CHAPLIN'S present day glory will rise or fall on his latest picture, "City Lights," in which Charles and his associates refuse to talk. There will be a musical synchronization however; and no doubt this picture will re-open the Talking Picture versus The Silent Film controversy; and line up a goodly array of adherents for both sides. In the meantime it will not do the Chaplin picture any box-office harm to start just such a controversy. Our friend Bruce Gallup, just lives on publicity angles of this kind, so watch editors, of Ye Good Olde Press, you are going to get a chance to pass an opinion, your editor is getting an answer ready now!

Incidentally United Artists might profitably give a cash bonus to the Fan, who after seeing the Chaplin picture, gives her, or his reason for believing that "City Lights" was made to be "Silent;" and that Chaplin's superlative gifts of pantomime, are a language unto themselves. There's no charge for this idea, especially to Bruce Gallup.

* * * *

WE UNDERSTAND that the "Queen Kelly" picture which Joseph Kennedy was producing, with Gloria Swanson, will not be The Queen of Motion Pictures, in other words Gloria is making a picture called "What a Widow," under Allan Dwan's direction.

The royal episode is said to have cost $800,000, but it is better to lose a million, than to spoil a star who is worth millions; and the Swanson success in "The Trespasser," deserves a picture which will uphold the standard.

* * * *

THE REVIEWER for the Film Weekly, London, calls "The Trespasser" a "Film-goer's Film," and further states that it has been "competently and popularly produced."

The story is said to have been written by "one of Hollywood's Englishmen," Edmund Goulding.

In speaking of Gloria, the reviewer states, "Gloria Swanson is not, of course, one of those actresses to whom the talkies have brought newly acquired fame. She was a great artist long before the talkies era, and it is doubtful if she will ever surpass her magnificent performance in "Sadie Thompson," unless it is in some remarkable singing film, for "The Trespasser" reveals her as the possessor of a splendid voice. She speaks and talks excellently, and her wide range of expression and command of emotions is all necessary to an exceedingly difficult character. "The Trespasser" is real cinema drama."

* * * *

THE BISHOP of Durham (Dr. Hensley Henson) The Kinematograph Weekly, London, reports, denounced "vulgar posters" and "scenes of crime and lust which form the staple, too often, of the American films." This is an address on "advertisement" before the Sunderland Rotary Club.

WHILE in the U. S. there is a real, live issue on the British-made picture "White Cargo," which has a plot, not so far removed from "Rain" as your Observer remembers both of these stage productions.

"White Cargo" is playing the George Cohan Theatre, Captain Harold Autens having secured American Rights.

It appears that the picture is being advertised on Broadway as the picture "banned by the Will Hays' Organziation." Whoever thought of that idea certainly selected a "bloomer" as far as good taste, discretion, courtesy, etc., goes, although it might draw a few into the box-office who delight in all things said to be "banned."

* * * *

HOWEVER, most theatregoers remember "White Cargo"; and for the "ban-loving crowd" the title should be sufficient, "White Cargo" representing the "derelict white men" who are shipped home to their respective countries after the native queens and the drugs they resorted to, together with the tropical inertia of the South Seas, has done them in sufficiently well, to label them "White Cargo."

It is not as good as "Rain" was in interest and quality, nor as far as dramatic values go, nor is it as bad as "Rain," from the angle that the lustful "preacher" is eliminated.

* * * *

BOTH stories have "interesting" women as leads, although "Sadie Thompson's" greatest vice is her sense of "easy virtue," redeemed, however, by a spiritual quality which reveals a desire for "better living," Sadie does not appear to have had an ill effect on any of the men she comes in contact with, in fact, one man is inspired to marry her, because of the fine qualities he senses in her makeup.

* * * *

THE NATIVE-DISPENSER of love-thrills, appears to delight in "breaking her men"; and when they do not break sufficiently rapid for her; and she cannot get rid of them, she tries a little poison as an added attraction.

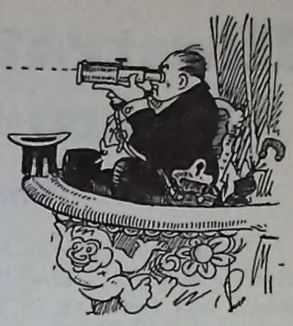
"Rain" left you with a feeling of pity for Sadie; and a rather under-current of illumination, it appeared to awaken human chords, but "White Cargo" made you feel rather hopeless. Your "Observer" is referring to the stage versions only, not having seen the screen production of "White Cargo."

* * * *

THE SCREEN version of "Rain" presented as "Sadie Thompson," was pretty well expurged of the "lust of the flesh," and unless one had seen the stage version, the "flesh complex of the preacher," and the promiscuity of Sadie's amours would not occur to you.

(Continued on Page 9)

Looking Them Over



"The Great Gabbo" and "This Thing Called Love"

SHEA'S HIPPODROME, Jerry Shea, Manager, "This Thing Called Love," Pathe. An excellent comedy adapted from the stage play by Edwin Burke and excellently handled by the leads, Edmund Lowe and Constance Bennett.

It is another case of marital bliss and marital eruptions, with the comedy element predominating, for what happens in the family affairs of the married couple seems so "homelike." There is another couple who try a little experiment, by way of testing "This Thing Called Love," when they risk the shoals of the matrimonial sea in a boat, made for two, but piloted on a business basis. In this respect the picture differs from the play, where the couple experimented before they married, experimented platonically!

Paul Stein, who directed, kept this little comedy merrily spinning along, and the "Sound" proved an added asset!

* * * *

THE TIVOLI, Tom Daley, Manager, presented First National's "Son of the Gods," with Richard Barthelmess. The story deals with the adopted child of a Chinese scholar and merchant, who taught the child the principles for which the Chinese philosophers have been revered throughout the ages. Barthelmess, as the son, is educated at an American university, falls in love with a white woman, who preaches universal brotherhood, democracy, but who lashes her sweetheart, "The Son of the Gods," across the face, publicly, when she discovers his supposed Chinese origin.

Barthelmess does not discover he is white until after he has renounced the white race; and gone back to the haven of his supposed own people. The story is by Rex Beach, and is interesting. Frank Lloyd made a most attractive, as well as powerful production of it. Barthelmess does splendid work, and his voice has a pleasing tonal value. The sets, epecially the Chinese, are most elaborate, and while being magnificent, they are artistic in their beauty, without being flashy.

"Son of the Gods" should prove valuable to any house, it ran two weeks at the Tivoli; and the business kept Tom Daley smiling.

* * * *

THE IMPERIAL, Maurice Stein, Manager, formerly The Pantages, for the opening bill had a big RKO Show with Albertina Rasch as the vaudeville headliner. These dancers will be remembered as one of the big hits in "The Hollywood Revue." They were a hit on the RKO Imperial bill also.

What proved, however, to be worth the price of admission twice over, was the feature picture, "Hot For Paris," Fox, with Victor McLaglen, Fifi Dorsay, and El Brendel. It is a long time since The Digest enjoyed a picture, or laughed as heartily over one. In fact, it left a desire to see the picture again. The story has a French setting, and atmosphere and reveals the love of a sailor (Victor McLaglen), for a cabaret artist (Fifi Dorsay), but this isn't the half of it as one would say. Our sailor buys a lottery ticket for the Grand Prix Race; and wins a million, but owing to his somewhat chequered career, he runs from anything that looks like a French officer; and this apparent dodging of the Law, helps him to discover Fifi. Ah, here is where the Frenchy atmosphere gets in its work, and it works overtime. The French officer happens to be an official of the company which promoted the "lottery," and who is in search of the lucky winner.

The Censor Board is to be congratulated on its sense of humour, for to have cut "Hot For Paris," would have cooled it off to an unpalatable state. The plot does not matter in a picture of this kind, it is what is introduced around the plot which makes it thicken. The director, Raoul Walsh, directed this feature with a sense of comedy values one would expect from a Frenchman. It is hard to explain, or repeat what makes this picture typically French, outside of its characters, and the pleasing and amusing bits of French dialogue. Any exhibitor booking "Hot For Paris," will be looking over his show at every performance. Walsh is also credited with being the author. Write another one, Walsh. McLaglen is a hit, as for Fifi Dorsay, oh, la! la! la! la! la! and by the way, El Brendel as a Swede "bane good," more than good.

* * * *

THE TIVOLI, this week, is showing "The Great Gabbo," Sono Art - World Wide with Eric Von Stroheim and Betty Compson. It deals with a showman, a ventriloquist, who is a supreme egoist, who is selfish, self-centred, but who reveals his best self through his dummy, "Otto."

"Otto" and Betty Compson, the assistant in "The Great Gabbo's" act, carry on quite an intriguing love-affair, for Betty loves Gabbo, but is only able to tell of her love, to "Otto," for "Otto" is the best part of Gabbo; and the only medium through which he expresses his love for Betty, and his finer side!

However, loving a "dummy" is not so satisfactory; and since Gabbo persists in his unkindness, Betty leaves him, and marries. Gabbo becomes famous, but longs for the return of Betty, but when she does return, it is to find that he has lost her.

This picture is unusual, and unusually good. It is so delicate in its love-interest; and in the pathos with which it abounds, that we wonder if the average audience will catch the fineness of it.

Von Stroheim does big work, revealing himself as an actor of pronounced histrionic ability.

Both Gabbo and "Otto" speak their English with a German accent, which gives the picture a foreign flavour, a bit of seasoning which is most palatable. "The Great Gabbo" reflects most creditably upon its producers, Sono Art - World Wide; and reveals a standard of quality, which places it among the best.

The story was written by Ben Hecht, and directed by James Cruze, with whose most admirable direction we are familiar. It is seldom that the press in Toronto has given a picture as "big notices," by way of artistic merit, as those given "The Great Gabbo;" and when the year's vote is registered, "The Great Gabbo" will be among the winners.

Illustrated London News Praises Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "Hallelujah"

Calls Warner's "Disraeli" "Very English in Its Atmosphere"

During the various hectic remarks, such as "Vulgar American Films" and "Vulgar Films Generally" with which this Industry is, particularly at the present time, being assailed, it is gratifying to republish two reviews of two oustandingly artistic American-made films, which appeared in "The Illustrated London News" of Feb. 1st.

This periodical has a tone; and therefore its criticism is of especial value and in truth a compliment.

—EDITOR.

"HALLELUJAH" AND *"DISRAELI"*

"IT would be difficult to find two films more divergent in subject, treatment, and effect than the all-negro drama at the Empire and the semi-historical, piquantly political romance at the Marble Arch Pavilion. Apparently alike only in their ultimate aim — that is, to entertain—they have two other qualities in common. Both are notable examples of true kinematography, and both will make converts not only to the fascination of a first-class talking film, but to the recognition of the artistic possibilities latent in the new medium, which still, in the opinion of many "die-hards," is devoid of all fascination and any vestige of art.

Pausing a moment to bring back clearly to my mind those dissimilar pictures, "Hallelujah" and "Disraeli," I get a definite contrast of shadow and sunshine, of something passionate on the one side, and something bright, scintillating, and well controlled on the other. For, though there are both sunshine and song in "Hallelujah," the mystery, the remoteness, the groping tragedy of a primitive people seem to envelop it in the velvety gloom of unplumbed depths where violence lurks. And though in "Disraeli" there are moments of defeat and moments of sorrow, the dictates of civilization are always nicely observed; the mask of self-control is never completely shattered, never permitted more than a momentary transparency.

"Hallelujah," King Vidor's great production, is a drama of negro life "down South," which marches forward to its appointed end with an inexorable rhythm, both of sound and of emotion, a rhythm that seizes hold of the onlooker, sweeping him, willy-nilly, into the current of its dark tides. It is possible that to some the unbridled religious fervour of these coloured people—reaching, as it does, a point where the see-saw of hysteria may soar to Heaven or crash to earth—is so alien, their self-expression so tinged with the barbaric, that a feeling of antagonism, almost of distaste, may colour their judgment of the whole picture. But even to these the dramatic handling of sound, the emotional surge of the tragedy, must be apparent. The negro's voice has proved itself eminently suited to mechanical reproduction. I speak of his singing voice. His speech is thick and his dialect difficult to follow. But his song, rich and rounded, swelling as naturally as a bird's to joyous outburst or to haunting lamentation, is truly golden. And it is against this golden background that Vidor has set the story of Zeke, turned, by the accidental killing of his brother, to religion, only to be dragged from the pedestal of an evangelist by the desire of a half-caste adventuress. Vidor has visualized this story from the screen point of view, and has stated it in terms of the kinema—as opposed to those of the theatre—using sound as an additional means to create his atmosphere and to convey the varied colours of his vast canvas. The story is largely one of mass reaction to suggestion. It embraces a baptismal ceremony wherein a crowd of white-robed negroes seeks absolution from past sins in the waters of a river, and a revivalist meeting where frenzy rises as steadily and inevitably as to the beating of a tom-tom in a jungle clearing. Here sound plays an essential part; without it the effect would be lost. Again, in a later, most gripping scene of negro vengeance, an amazing poignancy has been achieved by sound. The fallen evangelist has been robbed of his woman by her former lover. Zeke pursues them. The buckboard in which the fugitives are making their escape comes to grief, and the girl is fatally hurt. She dies in Zeke's arms. Grimly he tracks down his betrayer through the swamp-invaded forest. His quarry, panic-stricken, his strength ebbing, splashes through the pools and crashes through the undergrowth, whilst ever at his heels, silent save for the ripple of the water that marks his passage, Death follows in the shape of the avenging negro. Here, in this comparatively short sequence, is a clear manifestation of the value of sound in pictures.

"Hallelujah" loses some of its fine balance in the brief statements of Zeke's expiation in prison and his home-coming. That Zeke, swung hither and thither with the facile response to all emotional impulse characteristic of his race, should find peace with a lilting song on his lips is neither anti-climax nor an artificially achieved happy solution; but Vidor has devoted so much time to the earlier chapter of his epic that he would seem to have dealt somewhat cursorily with the scenes that bring it "to the end of the road." Ethically justifiable, that end is dramatically too abrupt.

The company, in which the principals only are trained stage-players, was gathered from the cotton-fields along the Mississippi. Man, woman and child, they enter heart and soul into the spirit of the drama. If they seem grotesque, even comic, in their fervour, they are only so to us, the lookers-on. They are utterly natural, and yet in their vitality they seem to have the experience of their professional colleagues. Amongst these, two remarkable artists stand out — Daniel Haynes, who plays Zeke with extraordinary power and sincerity; and Nina Mae McKinney, who, still in her teens, possesses a rare emotional command. In her concentrated passion she burns like some ill-omened gem, a fire-opal in a dark setting."

* * * *

"Compared with all this seething turmoil, this clash of unbridled humanity, "Disraeli" appears very calm, very English in its atmosphere, very careful of the dignities proper to a spacious, crinolined, and broadclothed period. A pretty love-story, with interludes of playful petulance, a nice sense of humour, a duel of wits between the most glamorous of English Prime Ministers and his opponents —such, on the surface, are the components of a polished picture. But there is a great deal more beneath the surface; the visions of a great statesman, the swift decision, the determination to overcome all obstacles, the inspiration that emanated from a mentality in which a glowing Oriental imagination was stabilized by shrewdness and exalted by a capacity for seeing the wider issues and the ultimate goal beyond the immediate drawbacks. I am not prepared to defend the historical accuracy of

(Continued on Page 9)

"Disraeli"

Mr. Louis N. Parker's delightful play which was the source of the present film production. It has been, it will be, attacked by the meticulous student of history. I confess, the accuracy of details, unless these be of vital importance to our appreciation of a situation or a phase of history, concerns me not at all; not even the addition of an attractive feminine spy, whose polite sparrings with her very alert victim add greatly to the humour of the struggle for the "dry ditch in the desert," and detract in no way from the spirit in which Disraeli accomplished the purchase of the Suez Canal shares. It is the spirit that matters, and the playwright, with the film-producer in his wake, has caught the spirit, otherwise "Disraeli" would not be the engrossing, stimualting thing it is. It owes much, very much, but not all, to the superb impersonation of the title role by George Arliss. Perfect in make-up, voice, and gesture, he appears to have got into the very skin of the part. Incisive and quick in speech, he conveys with masterly skill the intelligence, the wit, the fascination that conquered so much love and admiration, as well as the flamboyancy which bred a certain amount of distrust. But Arliss's achievement does not lessen the remarkably fine handling of this screen-adaptation by Alfred E. Green. The pictorial beauty of his settings are an indication of the right treatment of *la haute comédie* on the screen; and the refreshing pace of the speaking, as well as the quality of the voice-recording, sets an example that our producers would do well to emulate."

"The Vagabond King" Not "Vagabond Lover"

"The Vagabond King" is a Paramount adaptation of "If I Were King." It has the exquisite Friml music as an obligato. The press have acclaimed it as a "production rich with the rare beauty of priceless tapestry."

"The Vagabond Lover" is an RKO musical show, with Rudy Vallee of Radio fame. The story centralizes around a Jazz band player, who impersonates one of the "Jazz Kings," only to be discovered at a charity benefit, for his own greatness.

Observations

(Continued from Page 6)

"THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WANTED" had its title changed to "A Lady of Love," and stars Vilma Banky.

The stage production of this was just what its original title suggests, it was beautifully acted. Your Observer cannot seem to fit in "Lady of Love" unless the material has been changed to suit the new title. "Lady of Desire" would be more appropriate with the material intact, since the heroine is desired sufficiently by the Spanish, or Mexican, or South American gentleman to retain her as his wife, even though on her wedding night, she becomes conceived of a child, the father of which is the hired man, on the fruit-rancher's estate.

* * * *

IT APPEARS the "very good man," unfortunately broke his legs on his wedding night, while going to meet the bride.

The prospective bride has had a rather hectic career; and is looking forward to a life of peace, away from the lures of Chicago.

Circumstances once more play havoc with her fine resolves, but she is sufficiently fine-fibred to tell her husband what has occurred; and he is sufficiently fine-grained to take her for "better or for worse."

* * * *

PERSONALLY your Observer thinks that one "Disraeli," one "Broadway Melody," one "Hallelujah," one "Virginian," one "Rio Rita," or "Show Boat," etc., is worth a hundred of some of the Theatre Guild highbrow Freudian dramas; as far as our screen is concerned; now if someone gets an idea to produce "Desire Under the Elms" and changes its title to "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," that would be a bright idea!

* * * *

HAROLD L. PFAFF, Canadian Division Manager for Tiffany Productions, has appointed Mr. Maurice Davis, as Branch Manager at Montreal, for Tiffany Productions replacing Mr. S. G. Gibson, who has resigned.

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Rev. Herman Olsen Winnipeg Sermonizes on Movie Curse

(Special to The Digest)

"There is nothing more serious than to betray a little child, and if we have an institution which gives the child a wrong and crooked slant on life, then you and I, who allow this thing to continue, become partners in a great betrayal," declared Rev. Herman Olsen of Winnipeg, First Baptist Church pastor, in his sermon on "The Curse of the Modern Movie."

The pastor said he was not terribly concerned about what the adult population chose to see — that was their business. But he was tremendously concerned about the type of education the growing child received, because the children of today were the trust of this generation. He believed the time had come for all right-minded people to deal with the moving picture question from the point of the child's welfare.

Mr. Olsen frankly admitted that he liked to go to the theatre and that he attended every decent show he could.

"I feel that the Moving Picture Industry has within it the possibility of tremendous good," he continued. "I have been to many picture theatres where I am absolutely sure that everyone present came out very much better for having been in. I have been elevated to the heights of high thinking through some of the pictures I have seen."

He expressed the opinion that the theatre and the Church should work hand-in-hand and that if they did so, they would become a "power of good." In his estimation the moving picture was potentially the most powerful institution in the world for public education. No one doubted the superior effectiveness of "The visual" for any form of instruction. But the sad thing was that the Industry, so capable of rendering a high service to the world, had been prostituted in such a way as to present the most serious difficulty, and the greatest handicap in the work of the home, the church and the school. One need only look at the advertising in front of theatres to realize the detrimental effect which certain pictures must have on a child's life, and to realize the distorted view of life which the child received.

The pastor mentioned several "fine and wholesome" pictures which had been shown in Winnipeg theatres, "but we all know that the bulk of the pictures are a portrayal of crime and sex stuff," he said. It was regretable that children were precipitated into such an atmosphere many years before they were phychologically able to cope with such an experience.

While it was true that censors were at work in many cities, there were thousands upon thousands of pictures in villages, towns and cities, where no censorship existed. When it was remembered that 125,000,000 children daily attended pictures, it did not require an expert in child psychology to realize the menace to their moral life — "Evry time you go to a low picture you are voting for that kind of thing," he said. "We have been cursing the producers, but it is the customer who creates the demand."

The Copyright Bill

Ottawa.—The Copyright Bill, which is being presented in the House of Commons by L. J. Ladner, M.P., of Vancouver, B. C., will permit the collecting of royalties on musical selections played in Canadian theatres.

Motiograph Sound Projectors with Baldwin Amplification!

Complete equipment including two Model H. Motiograph Mechanisms with Cylindrical Shutters and Movietone Track Masks, two Motiograph 3,000-foot Upper Magazines with Reel End Alarms, two Motiograph Complete Sound Heads with Lens Systems, Photo Electric Cells and Exciter Lamps, two Motiograph Low Intensity Reflector Arc Lamps with Motor Arc Feed and Rheostats, two Motiograph Sound Bases with Disc Turntables, Pickups, Pilot Lights, 1/3 H.P. Synchronous Motors, Drives, Lower Magazines and Lamp Support Cabinets with Lamp and Motor Switches, one Vocalite Glass Bead Sound Screen and Frame up to 13' x 18', one Baldwin Main Amplifier Panel comprising two Baldwin Heavy-Duty Powerful fully A.C. Amplifiers, Meters, Switches, Monitor Speaker and Controls, two Baldwin Track Amplifiers with Meters and Controls, one Baldwin Master Fader, constant impedance type, with Dummy, one set complete twin Battery Banks with Charger, and Dry Batteries, and Cabinet, one complete set Main and Track Amplifier Tubes, one spare set one each tubes of each kind, Photo Electric Cell and two Exciter Lamps, installation and testing, not including wiring nor Sound absorption treatment.

Complete Sound Equipment as above, F.O.B. Toronto $7,500.00

Same equipment but equipped with Celco Mazda Units with Jefferson Transformers and Jewell Ammeters, Gardiner Velvet Perforated Sound Screen up to 10' 6" x 14', and Motiograph Model F. Front Shutter Mechanism,

Complete Sound Equipment as above, F.O.B. Toronto $7,000.00

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Remember, it's yours when you have paid for it!
Remember, Service on instant call but only when you may need it!

THE COLEMAN ELECTRIC Co. - 258 Victoria St. - Toronto, Ont.

"Courtesy With Service"

Representative Committee To Convene April 1st

(Special to Digest from S. R. Kent)

New York City. — An informal meeting attended by Messrs. Kent, Feist and Reisman, representing distributors; Messrs. Myers, Steffes, Richey, Cross and Blum, representing the Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, and Messrs. Pettijohn and Hess, representing Film Boards of Trade, was held at the Union League Club recently.

A proposal was made that a committee of seven consisting of two distributor representatives, two from the M.P.T.O.A., two from the Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, and one representing Affiliated Theatres, should meet in the city of New York on April 1st to put into concrete language the subject matters heretofore taken up by the so-called 5-5-5 committee. A further effort will be made to secure approval of this date by long distance phone from President M. A. Lightman of the M.P.T.O.A. and if it is secured this committee will go into session on April 1st.

The trade press will be invited to attend all sessions.

Allen Theatres

RUMOURS connect the Allen Bros. with a new theatre on Yonge St., just north of St. Clair Ave., Toronto.

It will be an important theatre, Sound equipped and modern according to all the innovations of the present-day theatre building program.

March appears to be an Allen Theatre opening month, four openings of new Allen Theatres are as follows: The Monkland, Notre Dame De Grace, corner of Westmount and Amherst, Montreal, seating capacity 1,400, "Sound" equipped. Mr. Jule Allen, Mr. Louis Rosenfeld, of Columbia Pictures and Herb. Allen attended the opening.

The New Capitol at Wallaceburg, was opened recently, while the Classic at Cobalt, was re-opened with "Sound," and the New Capitol at Smiths Falls, Ont., made the fourth new house.

No "In Memoriam" Number

"SIME," who has taken every occasion to villify the late Edward Franklin Albee, appears to have continued his hate of this venerable showman, even unto the grave.

"Sime's" printed mouth-piece, in its last issue, reports on the funeral service of the deceased, as from a report of same published in the New York Times. The inference is apparent. Evidently the passing away of one of the founders of Vaudeville, and one of our oldest and most widely known of Showmen was not of sufficient importance "to cover," according to the view of his persistent enemy, although our biggest showmen came to do his memory homage, and the RKO Theatres introduced one minute of silence throughout their circuit as a mark of loyalty and respect. A portrait of Mr. Albee was flashed on the screen giving the date of his birth and death, together with a request for silence.

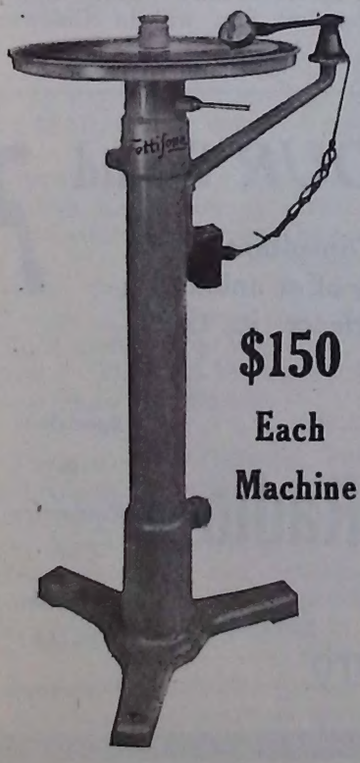
Sime's attitude is just another insult to the dead, and to his family, as is also the obituary which he published: and which belies and discredits all the constructive and humanitarian angles of a Showman, who brought honour and strength to the World of Showmanship.

There is one ray of hope in all this sordid Darkness of Malice, of Hate, of Revenge, we shall be spared the disgrace of "Sime's" idea of an "In Memoriam" number.

Incidentally, there must have been some good in Mr. Albee when Keith bequeathed his theatre interests to him, and his son, Paul, equally; and Paul Keith, after years of business association, and friendship, left all of his theatre holdings to the late Edward F. Albee.

There was an error in our issue of The Digest of March 1st, relative to a paragraph which states there have been 211 major installations of Western Electric equipment in Canadian houses. This should have specified Northern Electric; and that the Princess Theatre, Montreal, has recently installed Northern Electric equipment also.

It is interesting to note that eighty-five per cent. of the equipment installed by Northern Electric in Canadian theatres, is manufactured in Montreal!



Box Office Music!

Carl Andurka, Cozy Theatre, Orange Grove, Texas, says:

"Wish to advise you that I have installed FETTIFONE and am well pleased with same. Rush me another and include connectors for Powers and Simplex."

$150 Each Machine

Quickly attached to all projectors.

Two Fettifones and Fader complete with pickups - $350.00

Write for New 4-page fully illustrated folder.

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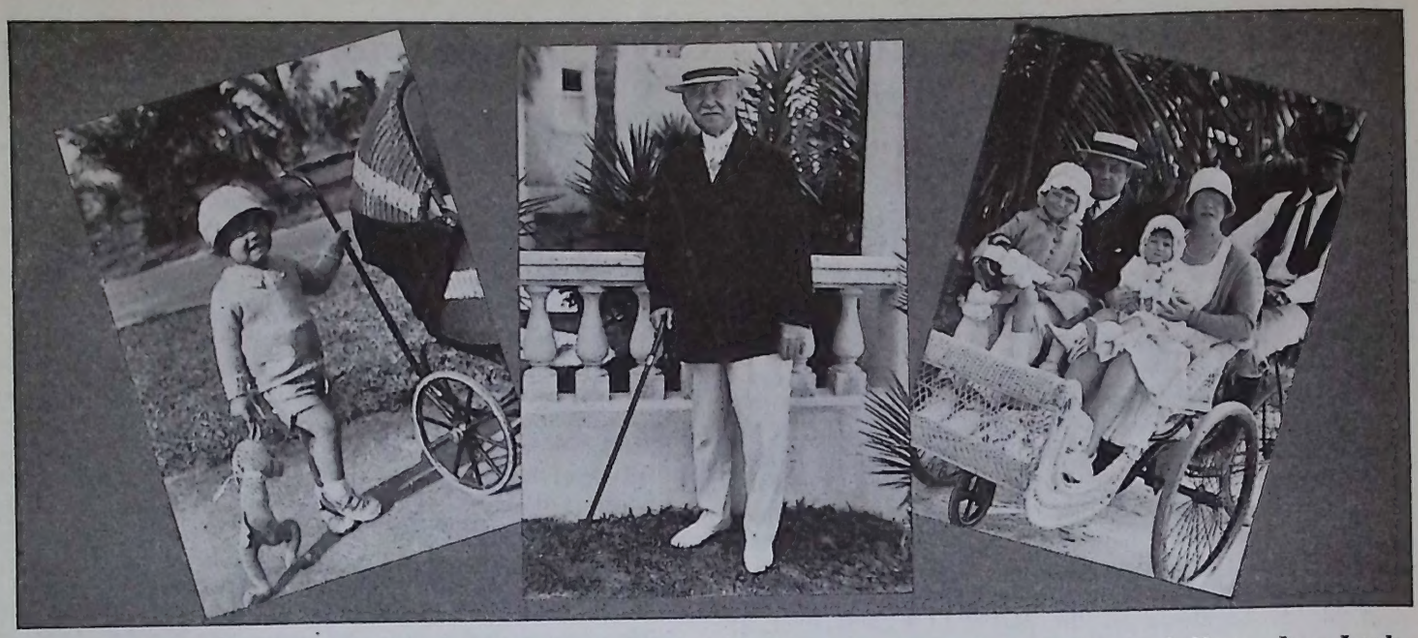

Edward F. Albee, Jr., son of Reed Albee and grandson of the late venerable showman.

Last photograph of the late Edward F. Albee, mailed to Digest just prior to his fatal illness.

Barbara Ann and Nancy Jane Lauder, with Ted Lauder, their daddy. Grandchildren of the late E. F. Albee.

THE OTTAWA Evening Citizen had an interesting editorial headed, "British Talkies Aided." The announcement is in relationship to an arrangement made between the Radio-Keith-Orpheum Productions of America and the Associated Talking Pictures of London, whereby RKO will distribute throughout the United States and Canada "a substantial proportion of the talking pictures turned out by the British company."

* * * *

THE EDITORIAL starts off by making the announcement relative to this matter as a "good news" item and follows this paragraph up by citing that we, in Canada have been waiting to see what British producers would make of the "new talkie."

"So far, not a single British Talking film has been seen in Ottawa, and it is doubtful whether any have been seen in all Canada."

The editorial explains as a reason for this that there are "precious few British Talkies to distribute, and still fewer of real importance."

One paragraph laments the fact that the British producers have been tardy in grasping their opportunity to invade the Talking Picture field, which gave them such an excellent opportunity to compete with U.S. producers.

The article concludes with the following:

* * * *

"NOW the outlook is again brightened by the announcement of the RKO and Associated Talking Pictures alliance. These two firms are to co-operate in making and distributing British talking films on this side. The British firm seems to have made a good start (it has still to make its first picture by linking up with the powerful United States corporation, represented locally by Keith's Theatre, and by getting some really important men at the head of affairs. These include Sir Gerald Du Maurier, Arnold Bennett, G. B. Stern, R. D. Blumenfeld (editor of Lord Beaverbrook's "Daily Express") and Basil Dean. The first film will be Galsworthy's "Escape."

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Show Business

Ottawa.—The Canadian Council on Child Welfare, Ottawa, has issued a white list of approved films under the heading of "Motion Pictures Children Will Like," in which there are three classifications: "A1," those particularly suited to children; "A2," those acceptable to both adults and children, and "B," those not appropriate for young children. The council enjoyed the co-operation of the censors, film boards of trade, and distributors in Canada in the preparation of the list, as well as receiving suggestions from the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Pittsburgh, Pa., and The International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Those classed as particularly suitable to young and old children include the following: "Carry On," "Disraeli," "Fast Company," "Half Way to Heaven," "Homes of Our Kings," "The Hottentot," "It's a Great Life," "Long, Long Trail," "Love, Live and Laugh," "Mr. Antonio," "Robinson Crusoe," "Royal Remembrances," "Shiraz," "Song of Kentucky," "Sweetie," "Welcome Danger" and "Why Bring That Up?"

Five of these are Paramounts; five are Gaumont-British releases; Warner Bros. has two; Fox, two, with Tiffany and Universal one each.

In the class for older children are: "Four Feathers," "The Great Divide," "Q Ships," "The Return of Sherlock Holmes," "Taming of the Shrew," and "The Virginian," three of which are Paramount and one each of First National, United Artists and Gaumont-British.

Those considered too exciting or beyond the understanding of children include: "Bulldog Drummond," "Dr. Fu Manchu," "The Greene Murder Case," "The Gamblers," "Illusion" and "Broadway Hoofer."

Mention is made that "General Crack" is not suitable for children as "the story turns on two instances of seduction."

Hamilton, Ont.—While "Why Leave Home?" was playing the Strand Theatre at Hamilton, Ontario, Manager H. E. Wilton received a telephone inquiry from a lady.

"What picture are you running to-night?" she asked.

"Why Leave Home?" Wilton replied.

"Because I want to see the picture," she snapped back.

Galt, Ont.—Famous Players Canadian Corporation will open a brand new theatre of the modernistic type in Galt, Ontario, on May 1, to be known as the Capitol Theatre. This will be the first house in Canada having this style of architecture.

Toronto.—Ben Geldsaler, director of the Home Office Booking Department, has been appointed to the executive committee of Famous Players Canadian Corporation, which comprises chief officials who discuss and decide upon plans and policies. Mr. Geldsaler was a former exhibitor and was previously supervisor of the company's suburban theatres in Toronto.

Toronto.—Charles L. Querrie, who recently celebrated his ninth anniversary as manager of the Palace Theatre, Toronto, has been elected president of the Danforth Businessmen's Association, prominent local merchants' organization.

Montreal.—Stock of Famous Players Canadian Corporation shot upwards on the stock exchanges in Canada on the report that negotiations were proceeding for a merger of the company with Paramount Publix. This was met with silence all around, because the voting trust, guaranteeing Canadian control of F-P Canadian has yet nine years to run, the trust trio being Adolph Zukor, I. W. Killam and N. L. Nathanson.

Ottawa.—Harry Sedgwick, of the Famous Players Canadian Corporation in Toronto, reached the finals of the Canadian Badminton championships only to be knocked out for the big trophies.

Almonte, Ont.—The Orpheum Theatre at Almonte is the latest house of the M. J. O'Brien, Limited, chain in Ontario to be torn asunder for general improvements and audien installation. An addition is being erected at the rear to accommodate the screen horns. New equipment comprises a magnoscope for full-stage picture presentation.

Ottawa.—Joe Franklin, manager of B. F. Keith's Theatre, Ottawa, has been re-elected director of the Royal Humane Society. Franklin is recovering from an illness of four weeks, due to an infection, which lodged in his eyes.

Drastic changes in the regulations governing theatres in the Province of Ontario are embodied in the act which becomes effective June 1 next. One provision is that no license will be issued to any theatre after May 1, 1931, which is not of fireproof construction. The inspector of theatres for Ontario is given the sole power to issue, revoke or suspend the license of any theatre, film exchange, projection machine operator or apprentice. The age limit for unaccompanied children is raised from 15 to 16 years. Even transactions of the moving picture business are under the direct control of the Government through a clause which empowers the Government to stipulate the terms and conditions under which films may be sold, leased or exchanged.

The new law also gives the Government power to prescribe the type of building to be used as a film exchange and operating conditions of exchanges are also to be supervised. Projectionists in all theatres are to be re-examined on notice and no operator's license is to be granted without an examination. A further test is necessary when an operator's license has been suspended for a fire or other cause.

The exhibitors are considering these severe regulations, particular objection being raised against the plan to permit the chief theatre inspector to have the whole say with regard to the issuing or cancellation of licenses, the only escape being an appeal to the Provincial Treasurer, who is a cabinet minister. The act provides that regulations may be enforced in one section of the Province or on special occasion, while different rulings may be provided in other districts or in other cases. Many theatres may have to be rebuilt or else dismantled next year, it is feared, because many of them have wooden floors, wooden roofs and other features which prevent their classification as fireproof.

Round About the Studios

A scene from "Trader Horn," starring Harry Carey, Edwina Booth and Duncan Renaldo. A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer feature, filmed in the jungles of South Africa, and directed by W. S. Van Dyke.

Dorothy Revier, starring in Columbia's all-talking mystery, "Murder On The Roof."

"The Great Wide Trail," one of the Alaskan gold rushes picturized in a vocal film, will be an early production at the Tiffany Studios.

The story, by David Graham Stewart, is now in production in Alaska. Ed Speers, cameraman, and a technical staff of seven, are travelling through Alaska, and have been for several weeks, but nothing has been announced concerning the plans because the agreement to make the picture was entered into by Phil Goldstone, chief studio executive, on a tentative basis, subject to the results in film and sound, of the first few weeks of work by the technical staff.

Several players have been signed for featured roles in Fox Movietone productions, including Matty Kemp, for "Common Clay," Bramwell Fletcher for "So This Is London," and Paul Nicholson for "Fox Movietone Follies of 1930."

Van and Schenck as they appear in their first talking picture, "Take It Big," for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Columbia's screen adaptation of the Broadway stage success, "Soldiers and Women," will shortly go into production under the direction of Edward Sloman. It will mark the director's first work for Columbia. The play is by Paul Hervey Fox and George Tilton.

"French Kissess" is the title given the new Educational-Tuxedo Talking Comedy in which Robert Agnew, popular juvenile, is co-featured with Helen Bolton, Monty Collins, and Betty Boyd.

Zasu Pitts, who won the approval of Paramount executives for her recently completed work in Nancy Carroll's forthcoming picture, "Honey," has been signed to play another prominent part opposite Miss Carroll. She will have a role in "The Devil's Holiday," on which work has just been started at the Hollywood studios under the direction of Edmund Goulding, author of the story.

The success of "The Cohens and Kellys in Scotland," emphasizing, as it does, the effectiveness of the co-partnership of George Sidney and Charlie Murray, has led them into a new contract with Universal. These two will be featured in a long series of two-reel comedies under the direction of Nat Ross.

"The King of Jazz" is completed, Paul Whiteman has shot all the necessary retakes and the black-outs featuring Laura La Plante, George Sidney, Charlie Murray, Glenn Tryon and Merna Kennedy are all made. The big job of cutting down to footage this highest expression of Technicolor loveliness and perfect recording will give John Murray Anderson the first headache he has had since Universal hired him to direct his first moving picture.

Konrad Bercovici, who is writing the next John Boles picture, arrives in Hollywood this week to complete his story, after conferences with Carl Laemmle, jr. and the scenario chiefs.

Raquel Torres is the first Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer feminine player to be given a role in a Spanish version of one of this company's featured pictures. She will have the leading role opposite Buster Keaton in the Spanish transcription of Keaton's new comedy vehicle, "Free and Easy," which Edward Sedgwick is directing. Don Alvarado is the only other player to be selected for this foreign version up to date.

Carmelita Geraghty is the latest player added to the cast of "What Men Want." The sudden indisposition of Mary Nolan and the immediate substitution of Pauline Starke is still the big news around Hollywood. A. H. Van Buren, well-known stage director and former moving picture figure, is assisting Ernst Laemmle in the direction of the dialogue of this Warner Fabian Special.

"Song of the Rurales" is the new title under which Tiffany's big all-talking outdoor special, originally titled "Down By the Rio Grand," will be made. Richard Thorpe is directing and the cast includes Armida, who had a leading part in "General Crack" starring John Barrymore, Don Terry, Marjorie Kane, Wesley Barry, Victor Potel, Harry Von Meter and Frank Glendon. Jack Natteford wrote the story. The music and lyrics are by Val Burton and Will Jason.

For the first time since they were featured in Columbia's "Beware of Blondes," Dorothy Revier and Matt Moore will play opposite each other in Columbia's "Call of the West." The picture is an adaptation of "Borrowed Love," a drama in which the East and West meet on a common footing after many adventures and complications. The story calls for massive settings and much contrasting action varying from the gay life in New York night clubs to a ranch rodeo. Al Ray will direct.

Johnny Arthur, famous screen comedian and occasional villain, is the featured player in a new Vitaphone Varieties comedy entitled "Paper Hanging" in which he is a worried householder trying to save a little money.

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The Beauty Spot

Gals and gags galore in a fast-moving variety show with a rosy plot and some fancy leg-work. With Bobby Carney, George McKay, Doris Dawson, Marie Dayne and Eddie Elkins' boys!

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